

CHAPTER III.

MUCH of my time was passed with friends on the shores of the bay, a short distance beyond Gloria Hill, and I was in a certain degree relieved from the banging and roaring of cannon fired in compliment to distinguished personages, who appear to select Rio as the place of all others, where they may smell powder to their noses' content; to say nothing of being immured on ship-board after nearly two months' passage. Escaping these disagreeables, I had leisure to stretch my limbs on shore, and enjoy the perfumes of flowers and fruit from the stems that bore them.

It is in the direction of the beach, or, as the Portuguese have it, Praya Flamingo, on the road to Il Cateto, and the charming and secluded little bay of Boto Fogo, that most of the diplomatique corps, and foreign merchants reside. The houses are rarely more than two stories in height, a combination of Venetian and Italian orders of architecture, with heavy projecting cornice, balconies and verandas, and washed with light straw or bluish tints.

The saloons are always spacious and lofty, with prettily papered walls, and floors of the beautiful, dark polished wood of the country. Nearly all these residences are surrounded by extensive gardens, blooming in bright and brilliant foliage, only matured beneath the burning rays of a vertical sun. There are no springs in Rio, and the grounds are irrigated by miniature aqueducts, led

from mountains in the rear; sufficiently large, however, to float in their narrow channels, serpents and many other noxious reptiles, enough to make one's hair stand erect. It is by no means an uncommon occurrence to find the giracca, a venomous snake, insinuating themselves within the sunny marble pavements of steps and porticoes, and I was assured by a resident, that one monster after having some four feet cut off from his tail, ran away with head and remaining half with a most cricket-like and surprising degree of celerity. Indeed I was myself a witness to the intrusion of an individual of the scorpion breed, who walked uninvited into the saloon, and was on the point of stepping up a young lady's ancle, when, detecting his intention, with the assistance of a servant, he was enticed into a bottle that he might sting himself or the glass at pleasure. Being somewhat unaccustomed to these little predatory incursions, I was particularly cautious during the remainder of my stay, to examine every article, from a tooth-pick to the couch, before touching the same. Another approximation to the same genus is the white ant, possessing rather a literary turn, and I was told, that it is not unusual for a million or two to devour a gentleman's library—covers and all, in a single night. I have never yet been able to conquer disgust for even docile, harmless, speckled-back lizards, and indeed all the hosts of slimy, crawling reptiles I heartily fear and abhor.

We found the town in a furor of enthusiasm in admiration of the song and beauty of a French operatique corps. I went thrice and was well repaid for the dollars, in sweet music of Auber and Donizetti—there were two primas—for serious and comique—both, too, primas in prettiness. The Academy of Paris Music had never, perhaps, seen or heard of Mesdames Duval and her partner, but La Sala San Januario had been captivated with

both, and beauty covers multitudes of faults, particularly with men, for what care we, if the notes touch the soul, whether a crystal shade higher or lower than Grisi, or Persiani, so long as they flow from rosy lips, that might defy those last-named donnas to rival, even with the brightest carmine of their toilets.

The theatre itself is a very respectable little place, having three tiers and parquette. The royal box faces the stage, hung with damask. The whole interior of the building was quite Italian—every box railed off with gilded fret work, and lighted with candles swinging in glass shades. The Brazilians are fond of music, and all the world attended each representation, including the Emperor, Empress and Court. As I had, in times past, seen a good deal of Don Pedro, when he was a studious, meditative boy, at the Palace of Boto Fogo, I was somewhat curious to observe the effect of old time's cutting scythe on the Lord's anointed, as well as on the rest of us clay-built mortals. His face and shape of the head had changed very little, but he had grown immensely; tall, awkward, and verging on corpulency even now, though I believe he is only twenty-eight years of age. His Italian wife appeared much older. Both were well and plainly dressed, attended by some half a dozen dames and dons of the court.

The curtain rose as the imperial party took their seats, and there were neither vivas, nor groaning manifestations to express pleasure or disgust, from the audience. All passed quietly and orderly, like sensible persons, who came to hear sweet sounds, and not to be overawed by great people. I made the tour of the donas through a capital lorgnette, and although like Mickey Free, fond of tobacco and ladies, I must pledge my solemn assurances, that with the exception of something pretty, at-

tached to the French company, there was not a loveable woman to be seen. I doubt not but there are rare jewels to be found in out of the way spots, secluded from public gaze, but it was terra incognita to me, and we saw none other than the light molasses-hued damsels, who are fully matured at thirteen, and decidedly *passée* at three and twenty. In the present age it is a questionable inference if saponaceous compounds might not be judiciously used in removing some few stains that nature is entirely innocent of painting; albeit, a lovely Anglo-Saxon of my acquaintance was vastly horrified at thoughts of a friend espousing one of these cream-colored beauties, valued at a *conto* of rais, and shiploads of coffee; and assured the deluded swain, with tears in her eyes, that it would require more than half his fortune to keep his wife in soap—supposing she should acquire the weakness or ambition to become enamored of fresh water.

CHAPTER IV.

"Uptorn reluctant from its oozy cave,
The ponderous anchor rises o'er the wave."

FALCONER.

ON the twenty-ninth of October, the anchors were loosened from their muddy beds; a light land wind fanned us out of the harbor, and with a white silver moon, we began our dreary march towards Cape Horn.

The following night the ship was dashing over the seas eleven miles the hour. The bell had just struck eight, watch set, and the topmen came dancing gaily down the rigging, here and there one, with a pea jacket snugly tied up and held by the teeth, preparatory to a four hours' snooze in the hammocks, when a moment after the cry, "Look out, Bill!—Overboard!—Man overboard!" was cried from the main rigging, and amid the bustle that ensued, the voice of the poor drowning wretch was heard in broken exclamations of agony, as the frigate swept swiftly by. Down went the helm, and sails were taken in as she came up to the wind, but by the strangest fatality, both life buoys were with difficulty cast adrift, and even then the blue lights did not ignite. A boat was soon lowered, and sent in the vessel's wake. An hour passed in the search, without hearing or seeing ought but the rude winds and breaking waves; and this is the last ever known of poor Bill de Conick.

He struck the channels from a fall of twenty feet up the rig-

ging, and was probably either encumbered by heavy clothing, or too much injured to be able to reach the buoys.

Friday, too, the day of all others in our superstitious calendar for those "who go down to the sea in ships:" even amid a large crew, where many, if not all, are utterly reckless of life, an incident of this nature sheds a momentary gloom around, and serves to make many reflect, that the same unlucky accident might have wrapped any other in the same chilling shroud. There are few more painful sights in the world than to behold the imploring looks, with outstretched hands, of a fellow being,

—"When peril has numbed the sense and will,
Though the hand and the foot may struggle still—"

silently invoking help, when all human aid is unavailing—before the angry waves press him below the surface, to a sailor's grave. Aye, there can be no more dreadful scenes to make the strong man shudder than these. Yet it seems a wise ordination in our natures, that the sharp remembrance of these painful incidents is so rapidly dispelled. This very characteristic of the sailor, his heedless indifference to the future, in a great degree makes up his measure of contentment in all the toils and dangers that beset his course, unconscious that time,

"Like muffled drums, are beating funeral marches to the grave."

A fortnight flew quickly by, the good ship going at as lively a pace. We passed the wide mouth of La Plata, buttoned our jackets, and slept under blankets. As the weather became colder, mammy Carey and her broods, with goneys, albatrosses, boobies and cape pigeons, swarmed around the wake, to pick up the stray crumbs. Divers hooks and lines were thrown out to entice them aboard, but for a long interval all efforts proved fruit-

less, until one morning, an albatross abstractedly swallowed the bait, and much to his surprise was pulled on board, like to a boy's kite. He measured eleven feet four inches, with enormous quills and feathers, and such a bed of down the monster had concealed about his oily person, was never known nearer than an eider duck. He had large, fierce, black eyes, too, with a beak sharp, and hard enough to have nipped a silver dollar into bits. Whales favored us occasionally with an inspection—rolled their round snouts out of water—tossed a few tons of foam in the air—threw up their enormous flukes—struck the waves one splashing blow, and then went down to examine the soundings. Thus we sailed along the dull shores of Patagonia, with the long taper top gallant masts replaced by stumps to stand up more obstinately against the furious tempests of the "still vexed Bermoothes" of Cape Horn, the bugbear of all landsmen, and the place of all others, where more yarns are spun, wove, and wondered at, than from China to Peru. He was a bold sailor any way, who first doubled the Cape, whatever others may be who follow. At last came our turn, and on the afternoon of the sixteenth day from Rio, the clouds lifting, we saw the dark, jagged, rugged bluffs and steeps of Staten and Terra del Fuego. The next morning we rounded Cape St. John, and were received by the long swelling waves of the sister ocean. If the great Balboa when standing on the mountains of Panama, regarding the placid waves of the equatorial ocean, could have known the tempestuous gales and giant seas of the polar regions, sporting around this snowy cape, he might possibly have been less overjoyed at his grand discovery. Our pleasant weather and smooth seas clung to us, to the last, and, as if loth to leave, gave one unclouded view of Staten Land, like a casting in bronze, with the bleak,

snow-capped heights, tinged by the rising sun. An hour after the bright sky was veiled by mist, the rising gale, from the west, brought hail and chilling rain. We lost sight of land, reefed the sails close down, and then bid defiance to the storm. Nothing venture nothing gain, is as true with ships' rigging, as thimble rigging, and we staked all our hopes on a rapid passage. Sorry work we made of it. The very birds were obliged to trim their pinions with great nicety in beating to windward—even then a terrible gust ruffled their plumes, and away they were driven, eddying, and screaming, to leeward. Still we strove the tempests to disarm, by stout hearts, and tough canvas, with partial success, too, for even with adverse winds, we managed to get to the southward, besides making something in the voyage; blessed, also, by a cool, bracing atmosphere, and day and twilight the whole twenty-four hours. Though the sun in tracking his bright career in either hemisphere is supposed to tinge the land and sea beneath his blaze, with what is generally called summer, yet an exception to the rule exists in vicinity of Cape Horn. The days, it is true, are longer; in fact the night is day, but the sun diffuses no pleasant, genial warmth, and is only seen peering out from behind the clouds, with a careworn, desolate, blurred face, as if he was ashamed of his company, and had marched entirely out of his beat.

In all this time hardly an incident occurred to make us even wink, except, perhaps, the tumble of a topman from aloft, who was picked up with a fractured spine; and a little sauciness, reproved by our stout armorer, through the intervention of an iron rod upon the limbs of a tall negro, thereby breaking his arm in two places. One's bones are brittle in frosty weather, and young Vulcan was made to submit to severe personal damages. I must

chronicle also the sudden demise of a venerable sergeant of marines, who departed this life one cold night, while relieving the guard under the fore-castle—the next day he was consigned to the mighty deep, divested of all his worldly accoutrements, save a hammock and a couple of round shot, to pull him into eternity. We had not exchanged nautical salutations since leaving port, and well nigh believed the ocean was deserted; however, one day there came looming through the mist and rain, a large ship, with all her flaunting muslin spread, running before the gale—the distance was too great to make out her colors, but sufficiently near to cause some of us to wonder when our bark's prow would be turned in the same direction, and the sheets eased off for home. Speaking of ships, while at Rio an American vessel of war arrived, and our sympathies were universally enlisted on learning that she had been two long months trying to reach Valparaiso, but when off the Horn, or in fact after having passed it, she experienced tremendous hurricanes and giant waves, which blew the sails to ribbons, tore away the boats, shattered the stern frame, and left her altogether in a most distressing and heart-rending condition, consequently she put back. It was worthy of remark, however, that she came buoyantly into the harbor, tricked out in a brand new suit of clothes, and when a number of officers went on board to survey her pitiable plight, they could find neither leak nor strain, and very sensibly concluded she was one of the staunchest and best corvettes in the navy, as indeed she was. John Bull took back his mails and declared he would never take advantage again of a crack Yankee sloop-of-war to forward important dispatches by.

Our pleasures were now limited, no one raised his nose above the taffrail if not compelled; our chief resource was reading, and

after absorbing heaps of ephemeral trash drifting about the decks, we sought the library and poured over ponderous tomes of physics, history or travels. Books find their true value a shipboard—cut off from all amusement of the land, we derive the full benefit by reading, for more than reading's sake, or for the purpose of killing time in silly abstraction, and many a stupid author is thoroughly digested, and many labored narrations of voyages are carefully studied, whose narrators have "compiled very dull books from very interesting materials," and they should be grateful to governments for purchasing, and thankful for indifferent persons to peruse them.

On the advent of Saturday nights, when the wind was blowing cold and dreary, we sought the lowest depths of the frigate. *Facilis decensus averni*, in other words, "'tis easy to dive into the cock-pit"—there in a cozy state-room, we made a jovial little party, conducted on strictly private principles, for the purpose of seeking medical advice. We consulted a pot-bellied gentleman, with a small copper kettle on his head, illumined by a spirit lamp, whilom, termed Doctor Faustus—unlike the Sangrado practitioners, the Doctor constantly poured out instead of in. One humorous fellow, the President of our club, who was rather stout on his pins, and *carée par la base*, poured forth wit and hot water by the hour, diversifying both occasionally, by ravishing strains on the violin, and chanting Virginia melodies, which acted on the heels of one of our attendants, in a complicated series of jigs, called the double shuffle.

At last the fates befriended us; a new moon appeared, and the west wind having apparently blown itself out of breath, a breeze sprang up from south-east and commenced blowing the sea and ourselves in an opposite direction; snow fell thick and fast, driv-

ing the thermometer below freezing point, and barometer running rapidly up. As the flakes fell and adhered to rigging and sails, the entire mass of ropes, spars and hampers were soon clothed in icy white jackets. The sun broke out for a moment and converted a showering cloud of snow into a magnificent bow. Rainbows of sun and moon are beheld by the million, but seldom a novelty like a *snow-bow*! The ship was hurried along at great speed on the sixtieth parallel, until reaching the meridian of eighty, when we bore away to the northward. Congratulating ourselves with the hope that the clerk of the weather had forgotten to announce our arrival to the court of winds in the great South Pacific; faint delusion!—off the gusty isle of Chiloe, we had a hug from a gale, which, however, exhausted itself in a few hours, and then left us to flounder about on the mountainous backs of waves as best we might—then there was an interval of rain and squalls from all quarters, when the breeze again came fair, and on the second of December, we anchored at Valparaiso, just five weeks from Rio Janeiro.

CHAPTER V.

THERE can be no greater satisfaction to a wind-buffeted rover, than sailing into a new place, and the consolation of knowing there are still others behind the curtain. It was thus we felt, and after rounding the Point of Angels, and casting anchor in the Bay of Paradise, fancied ourselves quite in altissimo spirits, if not precisely in cielo.

On approaching the Chilian coast, the eye of course seeks the white-robed Cordilleras, and well worthy the sight they are—forty leagues inland, cutting the sky in sharp, clear outlines, with peaks of frosted silver, until the attention is fairly arrested by the stupendous peak of the Bell of Quillota, and Tupongati, the colossus of all, tumbling as it were, from the very zenith—then nearer, diminuendoing down to the ocean, are generations of lesser heights, each, however, a giant in itself, until their bases are laved by the Pacific. It is a grand *coup d'œil* at rise or set of sun; but there is a sameness about masses of reddish rocks, ravines and mountains of the foreground, and one is apt to doubt the immense height of those beyond, from the gradual rise around. Moreover, there is nothing striking or diversified, as with their tall brothers in Switzerland or Asia; snowy tops without glaciers; frightful chasms, and sweeping valleys, without tor-

rents or verdure; all this is nature's design, but the decorations have been forgotten, and bare walls of mount and deep is all that appears finished.

Little can be said commendatory of Valparaiso; and truly I think the most rabid of limners would meet with difficulty in getting an outside view from any point; for, owing to formation of the land, furrowed into scores of ravines by the rush and wash of creation, with the town running oddly enough along the ridges, or down in the gullies, it becomes a matter of optical skill, for a single pair of eyes to compass more than a small portion at a glance.

The houses are mean; streets narrow and nasty; the former are built of adobies—unbaked bricks of great thickness—or lathed, plastered and stuccoed; the latter paved with small pebbles no bigger than pigeons' eggs, and only those running with the shores of the bay, are at all walkable. A little way back in the *quebradas*, or broken ground, is like stepping over angular Flemish roofs, and with a long leg and short one, to preserve an equipoise, you may walk along these inclined planes without any serious personal danger, save what consists in liquids thrown on your head, and the torture endured by your corns.

There is not a single public edifice in Valparaiso worthy of even passing admiration. The custom house is most conspicuous, facing the port; the theatre fronts one of two small squares, and but a few meanly built churches are to be found, packed away, out of sight, under the steep hills back of the city. Improvements, however were planned, and rapidly progressing. The port for many years had been steadily rising in wealth and population, under the sure incentives of a large foreign trade, and the enterprise of foreign residents; and all that appears ne-

cessary to make the city much in advance of other commercial rivals in the Pacific, is that Dame Nature should play excavating Betty on the next earthquake, and remove a few of the obtrusive hills that encroach so abruptly upon the bay.

There is an unusual bustle pervading the quay and streets, for a Spanish Creole town. As ships cannot approach the unprotected shores to discharge their cargoes, the port is crowded with multitudes of lighters and whale boats, constantly passing to and fro, while porters, bending under packages of goods, copper, and produce, are moving from the *duana*, or warehouses, to the mole and beach. Videttes of mounted police are posted at every corner, and small guards of soldiers in the streets, supervising the exertions of gangs of convicts at work for the authorities. In emulation, also, of the means of locomotion in vogue at Rio, there has been introduced a rickety contrivance, of the cab genus, called *birloches*, to which is attached a horse within the shafts, and another to caper at the side, similar to a Russian drosky, until a relay is required, when they are changed. They rattle through the town with reckless speed, urged by lash and spur of the driver mounted on the outside beast. The same system is pursued on the longest journeys, with merely the addition of a larger drove of animals to make up their own posts from the cavalcade—the only respite from labor remaining in the privilege of travelling at the same rate without the load.

Shops are sufficiently numerous, filled with manufactured goods from Europe and the United States, with lots of gimerackery from China. In the old *plaza* at night, almost every inch of ground is occupied by itinerant venders of wares, toys, shoes, combs, fried fish, fruit, and *dulces*; each squatted on his own cloth counter, with paper lanterns at the sides. The proprietors

of these ambulating establishments are women and children. A fine band discourses delightful music, on alternate evenings, and when one feels disposed to say pretty speeches to pretty damas, moving gracefully around, and enjoy what is in reality a touch of Spanish life, it were as well to saunter an hour on the *plaza*.

Valparaiso is extremely disproportioned in breadth to its great length, necessarily so, from the jutting elevations that hang over it. Immediately back of the heart of the city are a number of these salient spurs, on one of which is planted the Campo Santo—foreign and native cemeteries—while those to the right have been, by trouble and means of the foreigners, cleared away into small esplanades, having neat and pretty cottages, surrounded by shrubbery—one, the *flora pondia*, a very beautiful, but diminutive tree, blossoms luxuriantly, with delicate, white flowers, shaped like inverted cones, or bells, and although shedding no odor during the day, yet at night it fairly renders the air oppressive with perfume. These lofty turrets command fine views of bay, shipping, and port, fully repaying the fatigue of getting up, in the absence of dust, dirt and noise.

To the left, bordering close upon the harbor, is a long curving promenade, called *El almendral*—almond grove—for no other reason possibly than that there is not a vestige of trees or verdant leaves to be seen. Away at the southward, in the opposite extremity of the city, on what the sailors designate as the fore and main tops, is another succession of sharply riven ravines, filled and faced with clusters of one storied dwellings, from the summits down to the narrow gorges between. It requires some geographical knowledge to explore these regions, and though the toil of clambering about the uneven chasms and numerous lanes, be not pleasant, yet one is recompensed while mounting the steep

acclivities by the most novel and striking views of the sea or city at every turn—never being able to determine where the next flight will lead—whether but a few yards from the spot just left, with a bird's eye view of the shipping, or shut up in small causeways between redly-tiled roofs, with the scene closed by barriers of whitewashed walls, and even after attaining another airy eminence, under the belief of having the broad ocean spread out at your feet, one is startled to find himself gazing quite in another direction. These tops, with the *quebradas* between, are portions of the terrace, where we spent some pleasant hours, dancing the *samacueca*, or fandangos, to the tinkling of guitars, swept by nimble fingers of sloe-eyed Chilians. We were always received courteously and sincerely, and in making ourselves particularly agreeable, have been occasionally treated to a sip of weak rum negus.

Once, accompanied by a friend in these exploring rambles, we had the good fortune, through the medium of cigarillos, smiles, and a smattering of Castilian, to make the acquaintance of a hospitable old lady and her two pretty daughters. Carmencita was my favorite—lovely Carmencita! She was very pretty—large, very large black eyes, half shut with roguery, or coquetry; an adorable plump little figure, and what with a fairy touch of the guitar, a soft, plaintive voice, and a fondness for cigarillos, we thought her one of the most enchanting amourettes imaginable. Poor Carmen! She had just lost by the fell destroyer her lover, who was a superintendent of mines in San Felipe, but who had the generosity during his last moments, to leave his tender sweetheart a handsome legacy, a letter to the French consul, and his blessing. Pretty Carmen! She preserved each and all of these interesting relics, with great care, and although,

“Souvent femme varie, bien fol est qui s’y fie,” she resisted all further assaults upon her heart—confessed that I had *buena sentimientos*, but, nevertheless, she had resolved to live and die within the severest rules of platonism.

I know not how or why, but there certainly is an irresistible charm, that floats like a mist around Spanish creoles; indeed, creoles of all nations have a style of fascination peculiarly their own, which renders them truly bewitching, with the power of retaining their spells as long, and as strong as any. Not that their features are more beautiful, eyes brighter, or manners even as refined as those in older countries, for they are not; but still they have soft, languishing eyes, rich, dark hair, and pliant, graceful forms, combined with the greatest possible charm in woman, earnest, unaffected, and amiable dispositions.

It is to be wondered at, too, that in remote countries, where so few advantages are attainable in education, knowledge of the world and society, that they should be so well supplied with pretty airs and graces. It can only be attributable to that sublimated coquette Nature herself, who provides those little goods the gods deny.

We had the pleasure of attending a number of *tertulias*, or evening parties given in the houses of native residents, and witnessing the dances of the country. The *tertulia* is easy and sociable, without form or ceremony. The *bayles* are more staid affairs, where ladies are seated in silent rows by themselves—men very hairy and grumpy—taking advantage of intervals in dancing to lounge on the piazzas, swallow a few mouthfuls of cigar smoke, (not a bad institution this in warm weather,) and exclaim, *dios que calor!* (how hot.) At one of these assemblies we first saw a minuet called the *samacueca*. It was undertaken by a beautiful

young married lady, in company with a rather corpulent old gentleman, and danced in a very sprightly, rogueish manner. The prelude and music is similar to that of fandangos, but the movements and *motif* are far more indelicate, and it is by no means a matter of difficulty to divine the meaning. Although these innocent ballets would no doubt shockingly jar the nerves of a more refined audience, and many a performer might be considered “too fine a dancer for a virtuous woman,” yet I am convinced that among these unaffected creoles, naught is seen in the least degree improper, but they are regarded from infancy as the harmless customs and amusements of their country. As an individual I am fond of a notion of cayenne to existence, and only clapped hands, or cried, *brava! buena! bonita!*

The opera was in full blast—the house large and convenient, with very pretty scenic displays, and quite a brilliant constellation of Italian stars to illumine the proscenium, but on no representation did there appear evidence in the boxes that the manager’s purse was filled. We had the honor of being presented to the primo basso, Signor Marti, who conversed pleasantly with a melodramatic voice from apparently very low down in his boots. We listened to his sweet *seguidillas* with rapture.

We found the climate truly delightful. It was the summer of the southern ocean—pure, pleasant breezes with the sun, and clear, calm, sparkling nights by moon or stars. Little or no rain falls, except in the winter months, and as a consequence where the soil is fine and dry, dust covers everything in impalpable clouds, at the same time affording a desirable atmosphere for that lively individual, the flea!

On the coast of Syria the Arabs hold to the proverb that the Sultan of fleas holds his court in Jaffa, and the Grand Vizier

in Cairo; but so far as our experience went in Valparaiso, we could safely give the lie to the adage. As an unobtrusive person myself, I have a constitutional antipathy to the entire race, and invariably use every precaution to avoid their society—all to no purpose. They found me in crowds or solitudes—alighted on me in swarms, like the locusts of Egypt, destroying enjoyment on shore, and I fully resolved never to venture abroad again, of mine own free will, until some enterprising Yankee shall invent a trap for their annihilation.

I remember one mild afternoon sauntering on the almendral, when my attention was drawn to a lithe, young damsel on the sidewalk, who, whilst tripping along with a dainty gait, suddenly gave her foot a backward twist, with a dexterous pinch at the pretty ancle, and again went on like a bird. She had captured a flea! but it was a style of piedermain worthy of the great Adrien; a feat I was prepared to believe nearly equal to mounted Cossacks picking up pins from the ground with their teeth, at full speed—in fact, something really wonderful, and although I was quite confounded, and almost speechless with amazement, yet I followed mechanically in order to see what she could or would accomplish next. Nor could I repress some audible expressions of encouragement; but the fair *doncella*, unconscious of having performed anything remarkable, gave me a look, as much as to say, in the language of a touching nautical ballad—

“Go away young man—my company forsake.”

So not wishing to appear intrusive, I returned pensively to mine inn.

Fashions in ladies' dress are similar to those in Europe or the United States, and even among the lower orders the bonnet is

worn; but to my way of thinking, a Spanish girl's forte is in a black satin robe and slippers, a flowing *mantilla*; fine, smooth jetty tresses, and a waving fan to act as breakflash to sparkling eyes!

Of the men of Chili, or at least those of them whom transient visitors encounter in the usual lounging resorts of *vaut-riens*,—theatres, cafés, tertulias, plazas, and other purlieus, they cannot be said to compare with their captivating sisters—for a more indolent, hairy, cigar-puffing race of bipeds never existed. In dress they ape the faded fashions of Europe, retaining, however, the native cloak costume of the *poncho*. It is a capital garment for either the road or the saddle, leaving free play to the arms, and at the same time a protection from dust or rain. It is worn by all classes, and composed of the gaudiest colors, occasionally resembling a remarkably bright pattern of a drawing room carpet, with the head of the wearer thrust through a slit in the centre.

The President of Chili during our visit was General Bulnes, a soldier of distinction in the civil wars of his own state, with a laurel or two won in numerous bloody blows dealt upon the neighboring Peruvians. As the hero of Yungai, his Excellency was elevated to his present position by the bayonets of the troops, but latterly he evinced a keen sagacity in reducing to a small force this army of vagabonds, who are prone, in South American republics, in the absence of more agreeable occupation, to amuse themselves with hatching conspiracies for the purpose of slitting the throats of their former coadjutors.

There was but one regiment of infantry, and a few hundred cavalry in Valparaiso. The militia system, as with us, had been partially introduced throughout the provinces. It answered every purpose at much less expense than regular troops, indeed excel-

lently well, as a police, and to the credit of Señor Bulnes' subalterns, good order was most strictly and promptly enforced in his sea-port.

Every one subscribed to the opinion that the government was firmly established, which may have been attributable, in some measure, to the decided argument suggested by the President. Shooting, instead of talking, down all opposition. By these decided proceedings he has been enabled to keep turbulent spirits in check, and under fear of his displeasure, there had not been a revolution for a long time, which was, in itself, surprising.

Chili undoubtedly possesses resources within herself to become one of the most prosperous and flourishing of the independent states of the South American continent; and could the government be induced to take proper steps to invite a more general emigration, and make it the interest of emigrants to settle permanently in the country, by their vigor and enterprize, the true development of the mining and agricultural wealth might be easily accomplished, and this communion of interests might be the means of securing Chili from the doom which seems destined to await her sister republics. But notwithstanding the rapid strides of liberality throughout the world, it appears that the rulers of all the rich soil of America, washed by the Pacific, still maintain a cramped policy, actuated by religious intolerance, and an indolence unknown elsewhere. Destitute of energy themselves, the voracious foreigner soon fattens on their resources, and in the end, having no ties to bind him to a country where the religion precludes his forming closer domestic relations, embarks his easily acquired fortune, to end his days under an enlightened government.

It is indeed melancholy that such baneful influences do prevail,

when the whole universe is subscribing to more liberal notions, but as I do not purpose preaching a capucinade for or against the Chilians, or take any extraordinary measures to discover vice or follies, what might be termed the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties, and apprehensive lest any one should entertain ideas of me widely at variance to my real and confirmed opinions, I simply assure them, I have long since given over all philanthropic researches for that which does not affect my heart or digestion. I once lived with a Russian, who was blessed with a stomach and organs durable as the platina of his native mines, and he ever assured me, after first finishing a flask of absinthe, that hard hearts and good digestions were the only true elements of happiness in life. Becoming a convert to this doctrine, I care not for the foibles or follies of mankind, so long as people do not pick my pockets, or tread on my toes. I take more delight in seeing a child skip the rope, a monkey at his tricks, or a fish jump out of water, than all the palaces or churches on earth, and I had much rather chat an hour with a pert *dame de comptoir*, than dine with Señor Bulnes—nor were my spirits affected by learning the vast amount of copper exported, or the quantity of tea and tobacco smuggled; neither dispensations reduced the price of billiards, or induced laundry women to lave linen a whit the whiter; thus the truth being apparent that I am an indifferent worldly person, I make the merit of my necessities, in striving to live the space allotted me in the world, and not for it.

And now, if I be forgiven for venting this egotistic digression and harangue, I promise to make my mouth a *mare clausum* in future, for all personal grievances.